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# The Slacker

## A Play in One Act

By  
JEWELL BOTHWELL TULL

*Written for The Philomathean Literary Society  
of Cornell College, Mt. Vernon, Iowa, and  
produced by them in November, 1917.*

### NOTE

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BOSTON  
WALTER H. BAKER & CO.  
1917

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# The Slacker

## PEOPLE OF THE PLAY

GRANT MOORE.

MRS. MOORE, *his mother.*

BETTY CALDWELL, *his fiancée.*

BENNY SMITH, *a young lieutenant,*

MRS. SMITH, *his mother.*

ELLA BROWN, *his sweetheart.*

MRS. RALPH.

MRS. ELTON.

MRS. JONES.

*Other ladies and girls of the Marsville Red Cross Society.*

TIME.—An afternoon in May, 1917.

PLACE.—A living-room in the Moore home.



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# The Slacker

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SCENE.—*The scene takes place in the pleasant, comfortably-furnished living-room in the home of GRANT MOORE and his mother. On the wall at c. back hangs a portrait of a Civil War veteran—GRANT MOORE's father—over which is hung the American flag. Up stage at the r. is an old-fashioned wooden chest. A door, leading to the little front piazza that overlooks the main street is down r. Another door, r. c., leads to GRANT's room. At the l., heavy portières conceal the double doors to the dining-room. A library table stands in the c.—a little to the l. There is a vase of early spring flowers upon it. A settee is placed down r. The room has been put in order for a Kensington of the ladies of the Red Cross Society. It is early afternoon in May, 1917.*

*(During the rising of the curtain and for a time afterward, there is heard the sound of distant cheering, and a band playing "Yankee Doodle" and "Dixie." The young men of Marsville, nearly all of whom have answered the call for volunteers, are being drilled by young LIEUTENANT BENNY SMITH, a Marsvillian, home on furlough. The troop has just marched down Main Street. At the door, r., stands GRANT MOORE, a tall, good-looking, well-set-up young man of thirty-one or two. Near him stands MRS. MOORE, his widowed mother, a frail, silver-haired, gentle little woman in her early seventies. But she is still remarkably young and active. They are gazing out at the passing troops. There is a strangely twistful look on both their faces. The*

*young man's arm is laid protectingly about his mother's shoulders.)*

GRANT. They're a fine-looking lot, aren't they, mother? Fifty out of this one little town! And Lieutenant Benny's all there! Marsville ought to be mighty proud of him.

*(There is a sort of envy in his voice as he gazes out into the street.)*

MRS. MOORE. He is very handsome in his uniform, surely. *(She turns away with a little sigh. In the c. of the room she stops, looking up at the portrait on the wall, with the flag above it.)* But I think I like the blue your father wore best. Khaki, of course, is more serviceable. They say Benny's mother is just bursting with pride.

GRANT. So will all the other mothers be when their boys get into their new togs. Uniform makes a lot of difference—with women.

*(MRS. MOORE has sat down in her rocking-chair at the L. She takes up her knitting. She is making a sweater for a Belgian soldier. After a few moments of silence she looks up at the young man, still standing in the doorway.)*

MRS. MOORE. You—you don't wish you were one of them, do you, Grant?

*(She has tried to make the question a casual one, but she waits for the answer with a sort of wistful fear.)*

GRANT *(for a moment he does not answer. His lips tighten, his hands clench; then he crosses to his mother with a little protesting laugh).* Mother! How many hundred times are you going to ask me that question? Of course I don't wish I were one of them! It's all right for these young chaps without responsibilities. It will be a splendid adventure, and they'll be a part of a Big Thing—the Biggest Thing the world has seen for many a day! It would be glorious—*(He stops abruptly.)* But I am thirty-two. I have my career to

think of—and you, Momsey, dear! And in June there'll be Betty——

MRS. MOORE. You sure you're not—sacrificing—for me? I——

GRANT (*sitting on the arm of his mother's chair, and placing a tender arm about her*). You're not the person to be speaking of sacrifice, little mother—after all you've given up for me. You've spent every cent you had on my education, and now I must get some return. If I were younger—— But two, three, four—Heaven only knows how many years out—think where that would put me in my profession! Somebody's got to stay at home—we can't all go! (*He seems to be arguing with himself.*) And I—prefer to stay! You needn't fear losing your son yet a while, Momsey, dear!

MRS. MOORE. Think of all the poor mothers over there! It must be very terrible—— I suppose we can't realize—— But that reminds me! Some of the ladies are coming in to sew.

(*She rises, brushing away a furtive tear or two, lays her knitting on the table and begins wiping an imaginary speck of dust here and there, straightening a chair, a blind.*)

GRANT (*gaily*). Then I'm off to the office!

(*He gets his hat and starts for the door.*)

MRS. MOORE. Oh, Grant, dear! I've asked Mrs. Smith to bring Benny in for a while and show him off. Betty's coming, too. Couldn't you run back for a minute?

GRANT. Two such inducements are irresistible. I'll be back! (*He kisses her and hurries out R.*)

MRS. MOORE (*following him*). Don't be long then. It's almost time. (*When he has gone she turns slowly back into the room. Standing by the table c., she lifts her knitting and lets it fall again from listless fingers. Then turning, she walks to the old chest and kneels, taking from it a worn coat of blue, a soldier's hat, a sword with belt and scabbard. Tenderly she caresses them with old trembling hands. Holding them close to*

her, she bows her head as if in prayer. There comes the sound of women's voices, and a knock at the door, R. Hastily concealing her treasures and her tears, she gives a pat to her hair and her collar, and forcing a smile of welcome, opens the door. Several ladies of the local Red Cross enter with their sewing bags. There are some young girls, some middle-aged, a few older women. One, MRS. ELTON, is about MRS. MOORE'S age. MRS. MOORE shakes hands or pats an arm of each as they enter.) Oh, come in, Mrs. Ralph—Mrs. Elton. Warm for May, isn't it? Hello, girls! Find seats, won't you? We ought to feel inspired after the parade. You girls can just cuddle up on the sofa there. Where's Mrs. Smith?

ELLA BROWN. Oh, she's gone to round up Benny. He says he's willing to fight for his country, but he draws the line at sewing parties!

MRS. MOORE (*with kindly raillery*). She should have sent you to fetch him in, Ella!

(*There is a little laugh at ELLA'S expense. She blushes and ducks her head into her sewing bag. A light, quick step is heard outside, a tap at the door, which is immediately pushed open and the bright, pretty face of BETTY CALDWELL is seen peeking in.*)

BETTY. Am I late? Everybody here?

ELLA (*getting even*). Not everybody! Grant is absent.

Enter BETTY, blushing a little, but laughing with the nonchalance of the engaged girl. MRS. MOORE goes to meet her.

MRS. MOORE (*whispering*). But he'll be here pretty soon, Betty, dear. Did you bring your knitting?

BETTY (*nodding and smiling*). If there's anything I can do to help you—

MRS. MOORE. Yes, dear, a little later.

(*BETTY joins the group, sitting near the girls, at L. of sofa. MRS. MOORE sits c., near the table. Her face must be plainly visible during the following conversation. Knitting needles flash rapidly on*)

gray and khaki-colored sweaters, socks, and mufflers. There is a general buzz of conversation. Now and then a voice breaks out above the others.)

BETTY (with a mischievous glance in ELLA's direction). I saw Ella knitting a brilliant old-rose sweater the other day. I wondered if it was for Lieutenant Benny!

MRS. RALPH (a childless woman of middle-age, with a good heart but a rather severe manner and a sharp tongue). Shame on you, Ella Brown! When there's so much to do! And wasting the wool, too!

ELLA. I—I—was knitting it for my—my old maid aunt! She—she's an invalid.

(There is a general "hoot" of amused derision from the girls.)

BETTY. Look at the size of that sock! Do you suppose there ever was anybody with a foot as big as that!

ELLA. Oh, it'll shrink!

MRS. RALPH. You've probably done it wrong! I don't think they ought to trust the more particular things to girls. They can do mufflers and wristlets. Mrs. Elton here's the one can knit socks! Just look at that toe—it's perfect! (She takes the sock from the old lady's hand and holds it up to view.) How's that for seventy years!

MRS. ELTON (modestly). But I've had plenty of practise. I've had six boys, and I knitted stockings for all of them when they were little. How they did hate to wear them, because they made their legs itch!

MRS. RALPH. And four of them are going to the war! No slackers in that family!

BETTY. Four! Oh, Mrs. Elton!

MRS. ELTON. They want to go. I wouldn't stand in their way.

MRS. JONES (a meek little woman who has knitted quietly till now). But, oh, Mrs. Elton, how terrible! How can you take it so calmly? I have only one to go, if he gets caught in the draft, but I worry and cry night and day over it!

MRS. RALPH. Well—if I had a son—he'd go! And he wouldn't wait for the draft, either. I'd see that he enlisted *now!* Our boys aren't any better than other people's. They've been fighting our battles over there long enough. It's time we were in on it!

BETTY (*calmly; covering up her resentment at the first part of Mrs. Ralph's speech*). They can't *all* go, Mrs. Ralph. Some must stay to do the work here. And I guess the government knows best whom it wants!

MRS. RALPH. That's all right! But there'll be plenty who ought to go that'll get out of it even then, and the age limit's pretty low, seems to me. Besides, I guess we American women are as good as the English or French women any day, and we can do the men's work, if it comes to that!

MRS. JONES. It's hard, just the same. You never had a child, Mrs. Ralph, and don't know. Grant's past the age limit, isn't he, Mrs. Moore, so you won't have to worry. You must be glad!

(MRS. MOORE, *who at the first mention of the word "slacker" has started, and, letting her knitting fall idly into her lap, has listened with bowed head, now looks up with the hunted look of a wounded animal, her trembling old fingers plucking at the collar of her dress, as though it choked her.*)

MRS. RALPH. But he's going to enlist, isn't he, Mrs. Moore!

(*It is an indignant demand rather than a question.*)

MRS. MOORE. I—I don't know—I don't think so. You see—he—he has his profession to think of—and—and Betty! (*She smiles across at BETTY, looking for help in her time of need.*) They've been planning so long to be married this June, as you know. And then—(*slowly the bent figure straightens, the trembling hands grow still*)—it—it isn't that he—doesn't want to go—but you see, I—it would kill me to give him up—I couldn't stand it! My only one left! My father and three brothers were killed in the Civil War. My husband, who was a captain, was wounded and ill for years.

afterward. Only women who have been through it know! I stayed alone all those years he was away at school. He owes it to me to stay!—I won't let him go!

*(She has risen in her excitement. BETTY comes to her quickly, placing an arm about the old shoulders.)*

BETTY. Of course he isn't going! He doesn't have to and doesn't want to; so there's no need for worry, dear. Hadn't we better go see about the tea?

*(She leads MRS. MOORE to the dining-room. After the two have disappeared, there is the little shocked silence in the room that always follows an outburst of emotion,—a breach of propriety.)*

MRS. RALPH *(on the defensive)*. Of course it's to Betty's advantage that Grant stays! And, of course, Mrs. Moore is a very fine old lady, but it seems to me she's a rather selfish and unheroic mother! If I were a man I wouldn't let two women, who are able to take care of themselves, make a slacker out of me!

ELLA. Everybody doesn't think that way about it, Mrs. Ralph. It's a matter for Grant and his own people to decide. If he feels it's his duty to stay at home—that's his business.

MRS. RALPH *(she has been vigorously thrusting her knitting into her bag)*. I seem to have made myself unpopular. Of course we're all entitled to our own opinions, but I know what most think about Grant Moore!

*(She rises to go, but before she can reach the door, it opens and MRS. SMITH, a rosy, good-natured little woman comes in, laughingly pulling by the sleeve her reluctant son, LIEUTENANT BENNY. The women leave their knitting, relieved at this new excitement. The girls with cries of "Benny, Benny," help to pull him into the center of the group, where they examine his uniform, the cord around his hat, the sword at his side. BENNY gravely stands at attention, his eyes fixed unblinkingly upon the audience.)*

THE GIRLS. Oh, Benny, do you suppose you could get me a cord like's round your hat?—Do they ever really kill anything with their swords?—turn round and let's see your back!

(BENNY *"right-about-faces," then begins calling orders in a thundering voice, going through the drill with droll seriousness.*)

BENNY. Attention! (*The girls scream a little at the suddenness of the command, and laughingly scatter out of his way.*) Right turn—march! One-two-three-four. Squad right—march! One-two-three-four. Squad right—march! One-two— Right oblique— Halt! (*His maneuvers have brought him up L., directly in front of ELLA and his mother.*) Salute your Superior Officer!

(*He makes a sudden movement as if to kiss ELLA, but changes swiftly, giving his mother a resounding kiss on the cheek.*)

MRS. SMITH (*with a playful push*). Get out with you! (*She is beaming with pride.*)

MRS. RALPH (*near the door, preparing to leave*). Well, any mother might be proud of you, Benny. It's too bad there aren't more like you! Well, good-bye everybody. Hope you'll enjoy your tea!

BENNY. Oh, I say, Mrs. Ralph! You're not going before mess, are you?

MRS. RALPH. I think my room's worth more'n my company!

BENNY (*playfully*). Here! Here! Has there been a skirmish in my absence? What's your complaint, Sergeant Ralph?

MRS. RALPH (*mollified; with a little laugh*). Well, I didn't mean to cause any trouble or hurt anybody's feelings. But it seems to me—(*she gives a hasty glance toward the door, and lowers her voice*) that Grant Moore's nothing but a slacker, and I said so! He's big and strong and his mother's got a pension and this house and enough besides to keep her the rest of her days. What do you boys think about him?

BENNY (*embarrassed*). Oh, Grant? Why—he's all right! He doesn't want to go. 'Tisn't every one likes war, y'know—and he doesn't have to—so why worry? (*There is a little silence at the end of BENNY's speech, and BENNY follows the eyes of the others toward the dining-room door. MRS. MOORE has been standing there through BENNY's last speech. With his usual boyish enthusiasm he goes toward her, as she advances to welcome him.*) Why, hello, Auntie Moore! How are you? Young as ever, I see!

MRS. MOORE (*looking up at him with affectionate admiration and something of envy in her old voice*). Well—well—Benny! How nice you do look! So you're a lieutenant now? (*She tenderly smooths the sleeve of his khaki coat.*) Won't you come in and have a cup of tea? Come in—all of you. I thought it would be nicer in the dining-room than in here. Do come, Benny. Grant will be here pretty soon.

(*She leads the way toward the dining-room. The ladies follow, but BENNY tries to back away.*)

BENNY. I'll come back later. I—I don't care much for tea. I'm—I'm not hungry —

MRS. MOORE. But you must learn to like it, Benny. All the English soldiers drink it, you know.

(*The girls seize him, and a laughing tussle ensues as BENNY is dragged struggling into the dining-room.*)

BENNY. I'd rather face the Germans any day than a bunch of women! [Exeunt all, L.

Enter GRANT MOORE from r.; looks about in surprise at the empty room, hears the voices in the next room, and starts toward door, L. But at the table, c., he stops. BENNY has left his hat there. GRANT takes it in his hand and looks at it intently. At a distance the band has begun playing "America." The boys will be marching back down Main Street soon. He puts down the hat, and hands crammed deep in his pockets, paces the room with bowed head. He stops finally before the picture of his father on the

*wall, and stands gazing up at it. Through the curtains, L., backs BENNY, with the furtive manner of an escaped convict. He is carrying five or six sandwiches in his left hand and a cup of tea in his right. He starts for the door, R., without seeing GRANT, then, spying the vase of flowers on the table, he begins pouring the tea into the vase. GRANT has been watching him with amusement.*

GRANT. Watering the flowers, Benny?

BENNY. Hello, old top! How are you?

*(He impulsively reaches out his right hand, still holding the cup. GRANT laughingly removes the cup to the table, and shakes BENNY's hand vigorously.)*

GRANT. Was it too strong for you, Benny?

BENNY. Never could go tea! And with all those women!

GRANT *(placing an arm about BENNY's shoulder and leading him to the settee).* You're looking pretty fit, old chap! How goes it?

BENNY. Fine! Greatest dope in the world! Only thing lacking's the enemy, and we'll be at him pretty soon. But say! I've got an appetite like a German!

*(He eyes hungrily the sandwiches he still holds in his hand.)*

GRANT *(laughing).* Go ahead!

BENNY. Have one?

GRANT. No, thanks. You look equal to all of 'em. *(BENNY begins to eat vigorously, first from one hand then the other.)* How are the boys coming?

BENNY. They're a fine bunch. Take to the drill like veterans. But wait till you see them in their khaki!

GRANT *(looking at BENNY's uniform with a kind of envy).* It's—it's sort of fit-looking, isn't it?

BENNY *(with shy pride).* Well, it ain't exactly pretty, but it's—effective.

GRANT *(suddenly looking down with an embarrassed laugh).* You wouldn't—I wonder if you'd—it sounds

like a six-year-old, I know! But I'd like to know the feel of one--once.

BENNY (*surprised, looking quickly at GRANT*). Why, sure thing, old top! I—I didn't know you were interested in—in this sort of thing.

GRANT. Interested! Why, Benny, I'm—I'm crazy about it! I can't sleep at night for thinking of it. And when the band plays, as it's been playing this afternoon, I—I feel as if something were going to burst inside of me. You see, my father, "Captain Daddy"—up there—was a fighter—and my grandfather and great-grandfather and all my uncles. It was born into me. I feel like a traitor to stay out of it. But I'd feel more like a traitor if I went! I'd hoped the draft might catch me and so decide for me. But I'm past the age-limit. You see I've spent a good part of my life and nearly all of mother's money learning to be a lawyer. I'm just getting a nice little practise now. And there'd be all that gone for nothing. Then there's Betty.—We've been engaged ever since I finished high school—more than ten years ago. She was a mere infant then. But she's waited and worked and planned for this June. I couldn't ask her to wait any longer—and I couldn't give her up!—But more than everything else—there's mother! She's old, you know, and she's had more than her share of trouble. She and Captain Daddy were great pals. It—it was pretty hard on her when he died. Then she's had to stay here all alone while I was away at college and graduate-school and law-school. It would break her heart. Every day—two or three times a day—she asks me if I want to go. And I assure her that I don't!—What else is there to do?

(*He rises and walks to the table, his back to the audience. BENNY follows him, placing an arm upon his shoulder.*)

BENNY. I'm sorry, old man! I didn't know you felt like this. It's a deuce of a problem, isn't it? But I think you're right not to go. It isn't worth breaking your mother's heart. There's plenty of the rest of us.

(*Shyly, to change the subject.*) But you wanted to try on the togs?

GRANT (*turning with a little smile*). It's foolish of me, but I sort of wanted Captain Daddy up there to see me in a uniform—once. I suppose I'll never have one of my own—though God knows I've wanted one more than anything else in the world! But I can't break mother's heart or spoil Betty's life.

(*Unheard by either of the two men, BETTY has entered the door, L., looking for BENNY, and has overheard GRANT's last speech.*)

BENNY. Shall we go into your room?

GRANT. Yes.

(*He pushes open the door, r. c. BENNY goes in. GRANT is about to follow.*)

BETTY. Grant!

GRANT (*turning quickly*). Why, Betty!

(*They meet c., in front of the table.*)

BETTY. Oh, Grant—I didn't know! I heard what you said just now. I didn't know you felt that way about it! Why didn't you tell me? Why—

GRANT. Betty, I'm sorry. It was just an impossible situation. I didn't think there was any use saying anything about it—

BETTY. But it would have stopped their horrid talk.

(*She catches herself quickly.*)

GRANT. What talk?

BETTY. Oh—nothing. But if I had known—

GRANT (*insistently*). What talk, Betty?

BETTY. It isn't anything—just Mrs. Ralph, and a few like that. They're saying you are—oh, that horrid word!

GRANT (*with a little bitter laugh*). A slacker?—Well—I suppose it can't be helped. They'll have to say what they please, but I've got to do what I feel is my duty.

BETTY. But, Grant—I can't let you stay on my ac-

count! I can't let you sacrifice—"More than anything else in the world"—you said—you wanted the uniform. I can go on working—Dailys have offered me a raise if I'll stay—

GRANT. I don't want the uniform more than I want you, Betty. And what would become of all the waiting and the planning for June?

BETTY. We'd have June anyway. We'd be married just the same. Then—

GRANT (*taking her in his arms*). Betty—you dearest—you bravest little girl in the world—

BETTY (*with a shake of her head*). I'd only be doing my "bit"—along with thousands of other women—everywhere.

GRANT (*the light dies suddenly out of his face*). There's mother! I'd almost forgotten. It would kill mother, Betty.

BETTY (*the fine glow of sacrifice fading from her eyes also*). I'd forgotten, too. It would kill her—I heard her say so only this afternoon.

GRANT. It wouldn't be worth that price. War has demanded so much of her. I'm all she has. It's terrible to be left alone—at seventy. If she knew how I felt she'd want to make the sacrifice. But I couldn't accept—at the price! (BETTY  *nods in sympathy*. They stand for a moment in silence listening to the bugle call from the band up the street. There is a chattering of voices. The women are coming back.) The women! I'll go to Benny. He's going to let me try his uniform on—just for fun. Wait till the rest have gone and see me in it—will you?

(BETTY  *nods*. They clasp hands in silent understanding. Then GRANT hurries into his room. The ladies file in. BETTY walks down L., and sits on the arm of a chair, her face averted.)

MRS. RALPH. Well, I can't say that I like afternoon tea! But I suppose we'll have to drink it so as to feel more akin to our English sisters.—Has anybody seen my crochet needle? It's always working out of my bag.

(*Some of the ladies look about on the floor. MRS. MOORE comes down R. near MRS. RALPH.*)

MRS. MOORE. Did you lose something, Mrs. Ralph?

MRS. RALPH. Just my crochet-needle.—Oh, here it is—caught in my knitting! (*With a sudden dropping of her voice.*) I'm sorry, Mrs. Moore, you took so to heart what I said this afternoon. You know me—my bark's always worse'n my bite!

MRS. MOORE (*with kindly forgiveness*). Yes, I know, dear. But I—I feel very strongly on the subject.

MRS. RALPH. Yes—yes, of course! But you haven't anything to worry about. Good-bye, dear. The tea was delicious!

(*She shakes hands and goes. MRS. MOORE is busy bidding good-bye to the other ladies. The band starts playing again. It is coming nearer.*)

MRS. SMITH (*near the door, R.*). Listen! The band is playing again! They're coming back this way. I suppose Benny's with them, little scamp!—Come on over to our house for supper, will you, Ella?

ELLA. Oh, thanks! Coming now, Betty?

BETTY. Not just now. I'm going to help with the dishes.

(*MRS. SMITH and the other ladies hurry out onto the porch to see the boys coming back. MRS. MOORE accompanies them.*)

MRS. MOORE. I'm sorry Grant didn't get back. It was lonesome for Benny.

(*The women's good-byes are heard from outside. The band is coming nearer. BETTY turns as she hears GRANT's door open cautiously.*)

GRANT. Have the enemy all withdrawn? (*He enters, clad in khaki uniform, but without the hat, which still lies on the table, or the sword. BETTY comes to meet him, looking him over proudly, in silence. Then, taking the hat from the table, she places it on his head as she might have placed a crown. He takes her in his arm for a moment. Then turning their backs, her left arm still*

*about him, they both salute the picture and the flag on the wall.)* How do you like me, Captain Daddy?

(MRS. MOORE appears at the doorway, r. She stares wonderingly at the tableau for a moment. Then over her old face there bursts a look of relief, of pride, of great happiness.)

MRS. MOORE. My boy—my boy!

(She goes to him, her arms outstretched. GRANT turns quickly.)

GRANT. Mother, I —

(The hurried explanation he is about to offer is checked by the look of joy on the old face.)

MRS. MOORE. You have enlisted—you have enlisted! Oh, I am so glad, dear —

GRANT. But, mother—I don't understand! I thought —I thought you didn't want me to go —

MRS. MOORE (caressing the khaki-covered arm). I knew it would be hard to give you up, of course, but I wanted you to be your father's son! All my people have been fighters—I named you for a fighter. You and Captain Daddy used to play always at being "Soldier," when you were little. I—I have prayed that you might be brave and—and loyal like your father. I said I didn't want you to go because I couldn't have people talking about you. And I thought—God forgive me—I was afraid—you wanted to—stay at home!

GRANT (as sudden understanding bursts upon him, he takes her in his arms). I might have known! A soldier's daughter—a soldier's wife, a soldier's mother!

MRS. MOORE (looking up, happily smiling through her tears). You look very nice, dear, in your uniform—nicer than Benny —

GRANT. But it isn't my uniform, mother. It's Benny's. I just tried it on. I haven't enlisted —

(MRS. MOORE draws slowly away from him, pain and disappointment in her face.)

MRS. MOORE. You—haven't—enlisted —

GRANT. Not yet, mother—but I'm going to—right away! Now that I know two of the bravest little women in the world are willing —

*(He holds out an arm for each. The bugle call sounds stirringly just outside. MRS. MOORE brings from the chest Captain Daddy's old sword and fastens it upon him. BENNY, clad in GRANT'S bathrobe, pokes his head out of the bedroom door.)*

BENNY. Hey, Grant! Are you goin' to keep that suit all day?

GRANT. No, Lieutenant Benny. I'm going to have one of my own!

*(While, just outside the door, the band strikes up "The Star-Spangled Banner," the curtain falls.)*

# THE DUTCH DETECTIVE

A Farce in Three Acts

*By Walter Ben Hare*

Five males, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery, one interior. Plays two hours. Otto Schmultz's pursuit of divers criminals according to correspondence school methods affords two hours of side-splitting fun. Every part a good one. Good for any purpose.

*Price, 25 cents*

## CHARACTERS

OTTO SCHMULZ, *a correspondence-school detective.*

PLUNK JARLECK, *escaped from the asylum.*

JABO GRABB, *the police force of Splinterville.*

MAJOR HANNIBAL HOWLER, *on the war-path.*

AUGUSTUS COO, *a newly-wed.*

GLADYS HOWLER-COO, *his bride, the Major's daughter.*

AMBROSIA McCARTY, *the queen of the lunch room.*

MISS ARAMINTA SOURDROPS, *who loses her Jabo.*

HORTENSEY SMATTERS, *escaped from the asylum.*

KATRINA KRAUT, *from Hamilton Cidy by der Schtate of Ohio.*

## SYNOPSIS

ACT I. The railroad station at Splinterville. Lovers and lunatics.

ACT II. The same. Votes for women.

ACT III. The same. The midnight choo-choo.

# A STRING OF PEARLS

A Comedy in One Act

*By Claire Wallace Flynn*

Two males, four females. Costumes, modern; scenery, an interior. Plays half an hour. Peggy Madison, in a fit of spite about a string of pearls, tries to complicate her sister Ethel's little love-affair, but after some amusing tactics only succeeds in bringing matters to an understanding. Bright and lively; all parts good; recommended for schools.

*Price, 15 cents*

# A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

A Comedy in Three Acts

*By William Shakespeare*

Thirteen males, ten females. Costumes, appropriate; scenery, varied, or may be dispensed with. Plays a full evening. An arrangement of this play for schools and colleges. The growing demand for this play for school performance has led to the preparation of this addition to the popular William Warren edition. This play is singularly well adapted for performance under simple conditions, meagreness of production tending to enhance the value and effect of its beautiful lines. The less scenery, as a rule, the more satisfactory the effect both as drama and as literature.

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# FOR COLLEGE THEATRICALS

## FORTUNE BY LAND AND SEA

A Tragi-Comedy in Five Acts

*By Thomas Heywood and William Rowley*

An acting version arranged for the Annual Theatricals of the Harvard Chapter of Delta Upsilon for 1899

*By Janet Edmonson Walker*

Eighteen male, three female characters. Costumes, Elizabethan; scenery, varied, but may easily be dispensed with, the piece being even advantaged by production under the conditions of its period. Intended to serve as a full evening's bill. This is one of the items of a considerable list of the productions of the Harvard Dramatic Club that were to have been announced but that were abandoned as an indirect consequence of the European war. The version offered has been acted with great success and is entirely competent material for similar experiments by other colleges and schools. The serious interest in drama study that is one of the most conspicuous features of the present educational scheme has originated a demand for acting material of real value, and we are fortunate to be able to answer to it with a piece of such high literary and histrionic merit.

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### CHARACTERS

OLD FORREST.	PURSER }	pirates.
FRANK FORREST } YOUNG FORREST } OLD HARDING.	CLINTON }	
	CLOWN.	
PHILIP, his eldest son, married to Susan Forrest.	PURSUIVANT.	
WILLIAM } his younger sons.	HOST.	
JOHN }	SAILOR.	
MASTER RAINSFORTH, a quarrel- some gentleman.	HANGMAN.	
GOODWIN } friends to Rains- FOSTER } forth.	MRS. ANN HARDING, second wife to Old Harding.	
A MERCHANT, brother to Mrs. Harding.	SUSAN, daughter of Old Forrest, wife to Philip Harding.	
	BESS, barmaid.	
	Drawers, Officers, etc.	

## TOO MUCH SALT

A Comedy in One Act

*By G. S. Bryan*

Three male, three female characters. Costumes, modern; scene, a simple interior. Plays twenty minutes. A young husband brings home a friend to dinner to find that the cook has left and his wife has cooked the dinner. A series of disasters brings about a state of war and upon the battle-field arrive the wife's uncle and aunt as reinforcements. A flank movement by Auntie's pet dog turns the day, and all ends well. A trifle that can be recommended.

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With an Introduction on Impromptu Dramatics  
*By Eustace M. Peixotto*

This very original collection of plays for boys is one of the most interesting books of its kind that we have ever offered, both in its matter and in its origin. They are *for* boys and they are also largely *by* boys, having grown rather than been written, much as the Iliad was; having been spoken many times until their form was satisfactory and then written down. They were thus originated in the Columbia Park Boys' Club, of San Francisco; and have all been many times acted—one of them, "Rosie, the Girl from Paris," having been presented several thousand times in public as well as in private since its beginnings in 1900. "The Last Rehearsal" has been performed about two thousand times in this country and in Australia. The collection is offered with confidence that it is an adequate answer to that most difficult of all requests in this line—"a good play for boys."

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### CONTENTS

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THE LAST REHEARSAL. For six boys.

ROSIE, THE GIRL FROM PARIS. For nine boys.

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THE EVIL THAT MEN DO LIVES AFTER THEM. For three boys.

CHIPS OFF THE OLD BLOCK. For four boys.

THE TRAMP BARBERS. For seven boys.

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A Mother Goose Play for Children

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Ten boys, fifteen girls. Mother Goose costumes; scenery unimportant. Plays forty-five minutes. This welcome addition to the small list of Mother Goose entertainments can be given in any hall or schoolroom, no special setting being required, and can easily be presented by a smaller number than twenty-five children, the full cast called for, by eliminating some parts. The music called for is printed with the songs in each case. Strongly recommended.

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An Historical Play in Four Scenes

*By Edyth M. Wormwood*

Twelve boys, six girls and as many soldiers as are desired. Costumes of the Revolution; scenery, simple. Plays thirty minutes. Five characters may be eliminated by doubling, making it possible for thirteen children to give the play. Important papers are got to General Washington's hands inside the doll of a patriotic American girl whose adventures constitute the action. Recommended.

*Price, 15 cents*

# MUCH ADO ABOUT BETTY

A Comedy in Three Acts

By *Walter Ben Hare*

Ten male, twelve female characters, or seven males and seven females by doubling. Costumes, modern; scenery, two easy interiors. Plays a full evening. Betty, a moving picture star, going south on a vacation, loses her memory from the shock of a railway accident, and is identified as a rival, Violet Ostrich, from a hand-bag that she carries. In this character she encounters the real Violet, who has just eloped with Ned O'Hare, and mixes things up sadly both for herself and the young couple. An exceptionally bright, clever and effective play that can be highly recommended. Good Negro, Irish and eccentric comedy parts.

Price, 25 cents

## CHARACTERS

<b>LIN LEONARD</b> , <i>Betty's one best bet.</i>	<b>ETHEL KOHLER</b> , <i>a high-school admirer of Betty.</i>
<b>MAJOR JARTREE</b> , <i>of Wichita, not only bent, but crooked.</i>	<b>VIOLET OSTRICH</b> , <i>a film favorite, Ned's bride.</i>
<b>NED O'HARE</b> , <i>a jolly young honeymooner.</i>	<b>MRS. K. M. DIGGINS</b> , <i>a guest at the Hotel Poinsettia.</i>
<b>MR. E. Z. OSTRICH</b> , <i>who has written a wonderful picture-play.</i>	<b>DAFFODIL DIGGINS</b> , <i>her daughter, "Yes, Mamma!"</i>
<b>DR. MCNUTT</b> , <i>solid ivory from the neck up.</i>	<b>MISS CHIZZLE</b> , <i>one of the North Georgia Chizzles.</i>
<b>JIM WILES</b> , <i>a high-school senior.</i>	<b>PEARLIE BROWN</b> , <i>Violet's maid, a widow of ebon hue.</i>
<b>ARCHIE</b> , <i>a black bell-boy at the Hotel Poinsettia.</i>	<b>VIOLET</b> , <i>Violet Ostrich's little girl aged seven.</i>
<b>OFFICER RILEY</b> , <i>who always does his duty.</i>	<b>DIAMOND</b> , <i>Pearlie's little girl aged six and</i>
<b>OFFICER DUGAN</b> , <i>from the Emerald Isle.</i>	<b>BETTY</b> , <i>the star of the Movagraph Co.</i>
<b>MR. EBENEZER O'HARE</b> , <i>a sick man and a submerged tenth.</i>	
<b>MRS. EBENEZER O'HARE</b> , <i>"Birdie," the other nine-tenths.</i>	
<b>AUNT WINNIE</b> , <i>Betty's chaperone.</i>	
<b>LIZZIE MONAHAN</b> , <i>Betty's maid, with a vivid imagination.</i>	

Jartree may double Dugan; Ned may double Riley; Jim may double Archie; Mrs. O'Hare may double Ethel; Aunt Winnie may double Pearlie and Lizzie may double Miss Chizzle, thus reducing the cast to seven males and seven females. The two children have no lines to speak.

## SYNOPSIS

**ACT I.** *Betty's apartments near New York. Married in haste.*

**ACT II.** *Parlor D of the Hotel Poinsettia, Palm Beach, Fla. Three days later. Betty loses her memory.*

**ACT III.** *Same scene as Act II. A full honeymoon.*

# JUST A LITTLE MISTAKE

A Comedy in One Act

By *Elizabeth Gale*

One male, five female characters, or can be played by all girls. Costumes, modern; scenery, an easy interior. Plays forty minutes. Mrs. Ball receives a cablegram from her sister Lucy stating that *Jerry* will arrive that day and begging her to be cordial. Mrs. Ball then goes out to hire a cook, leaving three young friends to receive the unknown guest. The cook, sent down from the agency in haste, is greeted and entertained as *Jerry* and when the real *Jerry* (Miss Geraldine Take) arrives she is sent out to the kitchen. After considerable confusion and excitement she is discovered to be the "Little Miss Take." Strongly recommended.

Price, 25 cents

# A PAGEANT OF HISTORY

A Entertainment for either Indoor or Out-of-Door  
Performance

*By Walter Ben Hare*

Fifteen males, nine females by doubling, and has been given on a large scale with one hundred and thirty-eight men and two hundred and ten women. Eighteen males and twenty females is an average number. Costumes, historical; scenery, either elaborate or none at all, as desired. Plays a full evening. A very easy and effective scheme for a pageant illustrating the progress of our race in history, with full directions for economical costuming and simple production. Adapted for production by any one, anywhere, with good effect. Has been produced repeatedly and is perfectly practical. Strongly recommended for school exhibitions or for a lawn entertainment.

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*Part 2.*—"The White Man's Foot." Dramatic Indian scene.  
*Part 3.*—"A Song of Thanksgiving." Pilgrim song service.

**SCENE 4.** *Part 1.*—"The Spirit of Seventy-Six." Tableau with song.  
*Part 2.*—"A Colonial Garden Party." Historical characters in the Minuet. Petite Comedy.

**SCENE 5.** *Part 1.*—"The Days of '61." Battle scene with music.  
*Part 2.*—"Lincoln's Speech at Gettysburg."

**SCENE 6.** "America Triumphant." Song and Tableau.

# SALLY LUNN

A Comedy in Two Acts

*By Gladys Ruth Bridgham*

Three males, four females. Costumes, modern; scenery, one interior. Plays one and a half hours. Mrs. Randolph (Sally), having married a man with children of about her own age, is taken on her first encounter with them for a girl friend of her "kid" son, who is in the secret, and in this character wins a popularity that was denied her. Very clever and all characters first class. Strongly recommended.

*Price, 25 cents*

# THE CAMP-FIRE GIRLS

A Comedy in Four Acts

By *Walter Ben Hare*

Fifteen female characters and seven children who do not speak. Scenery, one interior and two exteriors; costumes modern and Indian. Plays a full evening. An admirable vehicle for spreading the principles of this helpful order as well as an interesting and effective entertainment suitable for any occasion. Peggy Malone, the little drudge, is a part of enormous sympathy; Zingara, the gypsy, very picturesque and dramatic; and Mollie Mealy, the old maid, a scream. Very strongly recommended.

*Price, 25 cents*

## CHARACTERS

PEGGY MALONE, *a little drudge.*

MRS. BACON, *a boarding-house keeper.*

BEULAH MARIE, *her daughter, aged seventeen.*

MISS HENRIETTA DASH, *a newspaper reporter.*

MISS MOLLIE MEALY, *an old maid, so sentimental.*

MISS LEE, *the guardian of the camp.*

ZINGARA, *a wandering gypsy.*

NEETA, *a little gypsy song-bird.*

NELL MASON

MARGERY GILMORE

BETTY THURSTON

NAN LESTER

MELISSA HICKS

DORIS GRAY

PHYLLIS MARVIN

*Camp-Fire Girls.*

## SYNOPSIS FOR PROGRAMMES

ACT I. Christmas day in a boarding-house. The poor little drudge. Beulah entertains the camp. Peggy dreams.

ACT II. The dream. The Princess Pocahontas.

ACT III. Same as Act I. The awakening. Her cup of misery.

ACT IV. A gypsy camp. The Carnegie medal. Happiness at last.

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A Comedy in Three Acts

By *H. J. Byron*

A new edition of this evergreen comedy, reprinted from an acting copy and containing all the "gags" and stage business employed in professional performances of the piece, arranged for amateur production by Frank W. Fowle, following the traditions of the Boston Museum. Starting with a run of more than 1,500 nights in its original production, no existing play has had a larger or more universal success in the theatre than this. Very easy to produce and a sure hit in amateur theatricals.

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